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**GLOBAL MOVEMENTS AND NEW RESOURCES -  
A PLANNERS PERSPECTIVE**

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During the last twenty years the planning profession has undergone a tremendous transformation. Not only have the visions, ideas and tools we use changed, but the overall framework for our actions as well. The planning world of today is a different world and a new culture of planning is on the horizon. The New World environment affects the way planners work, but the very meaning and the role of the profession as well. It is the spectrum of these questions that calls for our attention today. In this presentation some aspects of the relationship: the world environment - the planning professions, will be emphasized and brought into light.

**THE NEW WORLD ENVIRONMENT**

***Globalization - Regionalisation - Localisation***

Often described as a process of integrating national economies into the world market, or as a transitional passage from a high volume economy to the high value economy, globalization is amongst the key phenomena that mark the turn of the century worldwide. The phenomenon per se and its real effects appears to be widely articulated both at geographical and political level. Much emphasis has been placed on the relevant social, technological, political and cultural structures and processes it embraces. It is said that globalization modifies deeply the structural framework of rational choice and as such it is relevant for planning and the work of planners.

In the 1990's the economic aspects of globalization were in focus. From then on a pendulum swung towards other facets and the whole vision has changed. The key feature that attracts our attention today is the *heterogeneity of the world*. The differences matter, sometimes more than it appears, and we recognize the other two foci as equally important for our work: *regionalisation* and *localization*.

The triangle *globalization - regionalisation - localisation* creates a new framework for today's planning. It influences the way our cities and regions develop, but also places a new agenda before the planning community to investigate the practical implications of it.

***Sustainability and Diversity***

Following the 1987 Brundtland report - that humanity has the ability to make development sustainable - to ensure that it meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, the concept of sustainability grew into a much more complex system of values and gradually advanced into a worldwide development strategy.

The notion of *diversity* which is embedded in it and presents one of the key features of sustainability, is of particular relevancy for the planning profession. The world is too complex, and countries and regions often differ too much. Diversity is not a question of

culture only. Simplified and culture related interpretations belong to the past. Today, the notion of diversity is closely associated with (1) *development potentials* and *development options*, and (2) *community and civic participation*.

*Diversity in planning and planning for diversity* thus become a new motto of the planning world.

**WWW as a new resource**

The mobility of information today is an important factor in the world of international competition. A new generation of information and communication technologies creates new opportunities and potentials of unprecedented values. The World Wide Web support mobility in space and time. Yesterday of a limited use, tomorrow will become the intrinsic part of professional routine. The global network is not only the place where people meet. It is also the *economic* place, a *powerful economic resource* that fully participates in shaping development of many regions and cities worldwide, and as such is of tremendous importance for the planning profession. *Transparency, efficiency* and *economy* the key words of the www, support a call for information networking on the Internet to channel organizational and operational resources.

**Environment**

Environment is in the very focus of any discussion on development, regardless of region, country, or city. Providing a sound environment is one of the first steps in a long process of regaining the vitality and pivotal roles that urban areas play. Many countries and governments today pursue a whole range of different policies with a consistent environmental orientation. An undamaged environment contributes not only to healthy living but a high quality of life. High environmental standards are becoming an increasingly important *location factor*. *The market for environmental goods, clean processes and production technologies, as well as ecological services is expanding*. Companies that open up to this new market today, will be creating jobs tomorrow. Local and state authorities have a clear interest in supporting such companies as part of a broader industrial strategy.

**EMERGING PARADIGM OF THE PLANNING PRACTICE**

It is the intersection and overlay of these dimensions that creates a new framework for planning. Their interdependence has to be fully understood while developing a coherent and sustainable planning practice. In the early days, planning was concerned with creating "grand plans" for building and construction. This is no longer the case. The planning practice of today has a different and new role. It is aimed at creating flexible frameworks and orientation, while cities/areas continue to evolve.

**Major changes and trends**

FROM	TROUGH	TO
Cities as enlarged architecture	Cities as complex social, economic and physical systems	Cities as complex structures composed of resources, processes and effects of processes
Physical space	Physical, social, economic space	Environment as a common denominator
Quality of physical space	Quality of physical, social, economic space	Quality of life
Planning is aimed at creating and controlling whole environments	Planning is aimed at creating responsive environments	Planning is aimed at creating flexible framework and orientation

Planning provides the "end state" solution and control	Planning provides development strategies and schemes	The "framework" planning is attuned to implementation and action
Top-down planning	Encouraging self-help initiatives and public participation	Developing partnership and public involvement. Equity of access and involvement by all stakeholders
Planners product as a result of design rules	Planners product as a result of professional standards and norms	Planners product as a result of evaluated opportunities and risks
Control by "plot ratio"	Development impact assessment Environmental impact assessment	Strategic environmental assessment Sustainability impact assessment
Separation of activities/land uses for health reasons	Mixture of activities/ uses for social diversity	Different models in accordance with local needs and potentials
Confidence in the computer and quantitative methods	Mistrust of model based planning	Renaissance of the computer-aided work; Telematics; Internet
Public acceptance	Public participation	Public cooperation and partnership
Planning as the only discipline involved in planning	Interdisciplinarity and cooperation of sectorial knowledge	Transdisciplinarity and cooperation of professional and layman knowledge

A major transition from traditional and rule-book practice has already taken place worldwide. Current efforts are focused towards a flexible and innovative planning practice that creates new opportunities but resources too. The ideal pattern is not the one that prescribes but one that provides and supports. "Do universally applicable - principles lead to universally - applicable solutions? The answer is yes and no: there is a broad good - practice solution that is applicable in virtually every city, North and South, rich and poor; but this solution will need to be tweaked in particular ways to suit local conditions, local constraints and local opportunities" (Hall, 2000).